

Message Text

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PAGE 01 GUATEM 02614 032324Z
ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 ICA-11
TRSE-00 OMB-01 AID-05 ACDA-12 MCE-00 EB-08 /094 W
-----012418 040653Z /11

R 032226Z MAY 78
FM AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 144
INFO DIA WASHDC
AMEMBASSY MANAGUA
AMEMBASSY MEXICO
AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE
AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR
AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA
USCINCSO QUARRY HTS CZ

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: GT MASS
SUBJ: PAPER DECRIES F-5 TURDOWN

REF: GUATEMALA 2509

1. RELATIVE SILENCE WHICH GREETED REJECTION OF THE GOG'S REQUEST TO BUY F-5 AIRCRAFT WAS BROKEN BY A STRIDENT EDITORIAL IN LA NACION MAY 3. EDIORIAL STATES THAT GOG SHOULDHAVE FORESEEN REJECTION OF ITS REQUEST. AFTER ALL, FOR MORE THAN TEN YEARS THE U.S. HAS "FROZEN" ARMS SALES TO GUATEMALA IN ORDER TO IMPEDE MILITARY ACTION AGAINST BELIZE. WHEN LOOKING ELSEWHERE FOR ARMS, GUATEMALA HAS FOUND THE USG PRESSURING POSSIBLE EUROPEAN AND OTHER VENDORS, INCLUDING ISRAEL.

2 EDITORIAL GOES ON TO REPEAT CANARD THAT U.S. WAS RESPONSIBLE FOR BARBADOS' CONFISCATION LAST YEAR OF AMMUNITION
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PAGE 02 GUATEM 02614 032324Z

BOUND FOR GUATEMALA. IT ALSO COMPLAINS OF DELAYS IN REPAIRS OF "AIRCRAFT AND HELICOPTERS" SENT TO THE UNITED STATES. PERHAPS THE GOG, IN FACE OF THE ARGUMENTS AGAINST GOING TO THE U.S. FOR ARMS, DECIDED TO MAKE THE REQUEST "TO DEMONSTRATE ITS ATTITUDE OF FRIENDSHIP," SAYS THE PAPER, "BUT MR. CARTER DIDN'T GET THE MESSAGE." THE "PACIFIST" U.S. PRESIDENT HAS

THEREFORE LEFT GUATEMALA WITH NO ALTERNATIVE BUT TO BUY AIRPLANES ELSEWHERE. SUCH ATTITUDES HAVE FORCED OTHER LATIN AMERICAN COUNTRIES TO RESORT TO PURCHASES IN CZECHOSLOVAKIA AND THE USSR. INEVITABLY THE STATE DEPT DENOUNCES SUCH ACTIONS AS "COMMUNIST PENETRATION."

3. ALLUDING TO PRESS REPORT THAT IT "WOULD HAVE BEEN VERY DIFFICULT TO DENY AUTHORIZATION FOR A F-5 SALE TO MEXICO" HAD MEXICO NOT WITHDRAWN ITS REQUEST, EDITORIAL COMMENTS THAT, BY CONTRAST, DENIAL OF GUATEMALA'S REQUEST WAS "EASY."

4. COMMENT: LA NACION HAS CONSISTENTLY DISPLAYED JAUNDICED VIEW OF U.S. MOTIVE IN DEALINGS WITH GUATEMALA AND LATIN AMERICA. THIS PARTICULAR EXAMPLE COMBINES ELEMENTS OF FACT, EXAGGERATION AND INACCURACY. SO FAR AS WE KNOW, THE ONLY RECENT PROBLEM WITH REPAIRS OF GUATEMALAN EQUIPMENT WAS A DELAY IN SERVICING THE PRESIDENTIAL PLANE BY BEECHCRAFT. WHILE IT PROBABLY WAS NOT PLANTED BY THE GOG (DESPITE FACT THAT PUBLISHER OF LA NACION IS THE PRESIDENTIAL PRESS SECRETARY), THE COMMENTARY DOES NOT MUCH EXAGGERATE THE UNDERCURRENT OF FRUSTRATION WITHIN THE GUATEMALAN MILITARY WITH REGARD TO OUR ARMS TRANSFER POLICY.
BOSTER

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Message Attributes

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